



## **Immunize Canada: Maintaining Immunization during the COVID-19 Pandemic**

April 27, 2020

Immunize Canada strongly supports the continuation of immunization during the COVID-19 pandemic to reduce the risk of morbidity and mortality associated with the potential re-emergence of vaccine-preventable diseases in infants, pregnant women, older adults, people with one or more comorbidity, and people with medical conditions that require the use of therapies that suppress or compromise their immune system. Immunizations are essential.

Strategies to reduce the spread of SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, in communities and decrease its burden on the health system include physical distancing, staying at home, and reducing face-to-face encounters. Under normal conditions, health care providers would use clinic visits such as well-child appointments to recommend and deliver routine immunizations. However, the cancellation or postponement of routine immunizations may inadvertently pave the way for outbreaks of vaccine-preventable diseases such as measles, pertussis and meningitis.

There is also heightened concern that vaccine-preventable diseases may spread once physical distancing measures are relaxed and international travel is resumed. It is therefore imperative that the interruption of routine immunizations be minimized to protect vulnerable populations. Immunizations administered during the pandemic should be delivered as directed by provinces and territories until normal immunization practices are resumed. Contact your provincial/territorial ministry of health for details on immunization programs.

### References

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